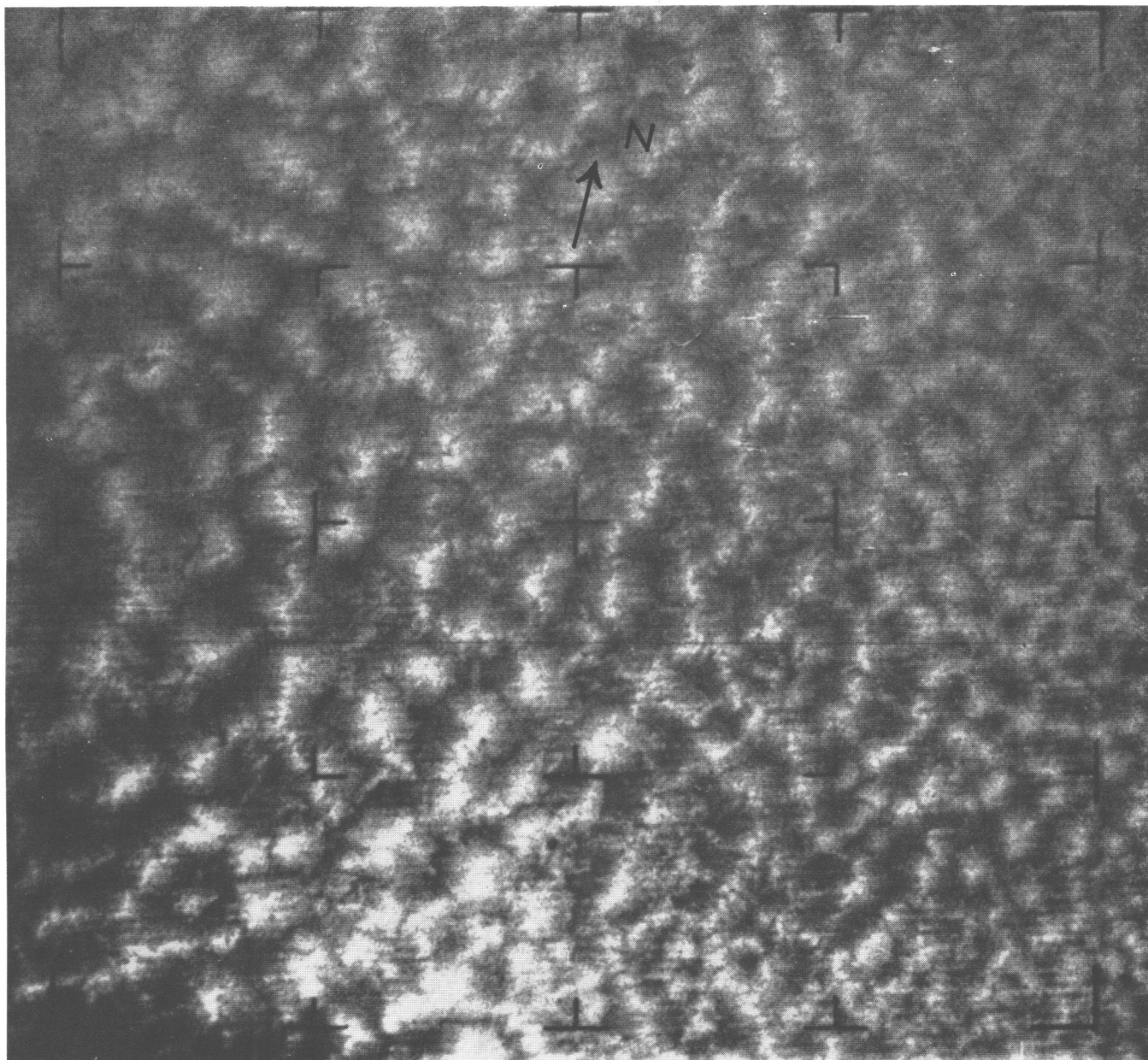


## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Many satellite photographs have revealed extensive areas of cellular stratocumulus, but few have shown such a strikingly regular pattern as that seen here. This Nimbus I AVCS photograph was taken over the subtropical eastern North Pacific at 1930 GMT, September 6, 1964, and was received at Gilmore Creek, Alaska, via tape mode. North is indicated by the arrow.

The overall appearance strongly resembles certain patterns of laboratory-produced Bénard convection cells. However, the horizontal diameters of individual elements in this picture average approximately 20 statute miles, with a general increase in size from right to left. It is believed that the more highly reflective portions of individual elements correspond to thicker clouds and upward motion and that the darker portions represent thinner clouds and downward motion. It is also believed

that the highly regular pattern with no visible streakiness is evidence of very small vertical wind shear through the cloud layer, but the lack of corroborative data makes this uncertain. There is, however, a slight tendency for the cells near the center of the picture to be aligned in north-south rows. The surface analysis for 1800 GMT, September 6, showed the area to be near the southeastern periphery of a large anticyclone and experiencing light north-to-northeast winds.

The photograph was taken looking almost vertically downward from an altitude of 464 statute miles. The picture center is at approximately  $20^{\circ}$  N.,  $122^{\circ}$  W., roughly 650 statute miles south-southeast of Los Angeles, Calif. Each side of the photograph represents about 300 miles in length.